

Rotherham local plan

Supplementary Planning Document No. 6 Shop Front Design Guide



Adopted June 2020

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Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council



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Introduction

This Supplementary Planning Document offers detailed advice and guidance to support and encourage good quality shop front design. It is aimed to secure improvements to the visual quality of shop frontages. It promotes good shop front design that celebrates the character and architectural detailing of the original buildings to improve the townscape which will benefit all the traders and the community as a whole.

- 1** Shop front design is significant in creating a quality environment. It is important that they should not compromise the local character, scale and architectural quality of the individual buildings.
- 2** The local planning authority is keen to encourage both the reinstatement of historic shop fronts and the provision of contemporary designs. This is a guide to support designers and applicants in achieve this.
- 3** The Council is committed to creating town centres that will be welcoming and attractive, projecting an image of quality and friendliness that will bring shoppers back into centres. It is also keen to encourage quality shopping environments where developments take place outside of Rotherham's centres.

Status

- 4** This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared in line with national planning policy and relevant legislation and regulations. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies that SPD add further detail and guidance to the policies in the development plan. They are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5** As required by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) consultation on a draft of this SPD took place between 07 October and 04 November 2019. The accompanying Consultation Statement sets out further detail on this consultation, including who was consulted, a summary of the main issues raised and how these have been addressed in the SPD. It also contains an adoption statement, confirming that this SPD was adopted by Rotherham Council on 15 June 2020.

Planning Policy

National planning policy

6 The NPPF makes clear that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, creating better places in which to live and work and helping make development acceptable to communities (paragraph 124). It also supports development in town centres which reflects their distinctive characters (paragraph 85).

7 Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of proposals. NPPF (paragraph 127) also states that development should, amongst other things:

- add to the overall quality of the area;
- be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; and
- create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

Local planning policy

8 Rotherham's Local Plan consists of the Core Strategy (adopted in September 2014) and the Sites and Policies Document (adopted in June 2018), alongside the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (adopted in March 2012). These are available from our website: <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan>

9 This guidance provides additional detail to, and should be read in conjunction with, the following policies:

Policy CS28 Sustainable Design	which sets out a range of design considerations to which proposals should have regard.
Policy SP40 Listed Buildings	which sets out detailed principle for alteration to a Listed Building.
Policy SP41 Conservation Area	which sets out development area required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and their setting.
Policy SP55 Design Principles	which sets out detailed design principles to which proposals should have regard.
Policy SP59 Shop Front Design	which sets out detailed policy regarding new and replacement shop fronts.
Policy SP60 Advertisements	which sets out detailed policy regarding the design and placement of advertisements.

10 As set out in the above Policies, the Council will have regard to a range of issues when considering planning applications involving new or replacement shop fronts, including:

- that design should respect the character of the building and take all opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions;
- that development proposals are responsive to their context and visually attractive as a result of good architecture;
- the setting of the site, including the size, scale, mass, volume, height, orientation, form, and grain of surrounding development;
- the type of building materials, their colour and architectural detailing, including maximising the use of transparent glazing ;
- whether proposals reinforce and complement local distinctiveness and create a positive sense of place;
- the creation of safe, secure and accessible environments including the use of lighting and the appropriate design and location of shutters;
- the design and layout of buildings to enable sufficient sunlight and daylight to penetrate into and between buildings, and ensure that adjoining land or properties are protected from overshadowing; and
- that advertisements are of the highest possible standard and contribute to a safe and attractive environment.

Legislation requirements

Planning permission

11 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), planning permission is required if:

- the development is within the curtilage of a listed building;
- any alteration would be within a Conservation Area;
- the development would consist of or include the construction or provision of a verandah, balcony or raised platform;
- any part of the development would extend beyond an existing shop front;
- the development would involve the insertion or creation of a new shop front or the alteration or replacement of an existing shop front; or
- the development would involve the installation or replacement of a security grill or shutter on a shop front

12 The list is not exhaustive and as a general guidance planning permission is likely to be required if the development would significantly change the external appearance of the building. As such, the Council should be contacted for advice prior to commencing any work.

Listed building consent

13 Listed building consent is required for any works to demolish any part of a listed building or to alter or extend it in a way that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, irrespective of whether planning permission is also required.

14 For all grades of listed building, unless the list entry indicates otherwise, the listing status covers the entire building, internal and external, and may cover objects fixed to it, and also curtilage buildings or other structures.

15 Undertaking works, or causing works to be undertaken, to a listed building which would affect its character as a building of special historic or architectural interest, without first obtaining listed building consent is a criminal offence under Section 9 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990⁽¹⁾.

16 There is no fee for submitting an application for listed building consent.

17 This includes re-painting a shop front in a different colour, installing blinds or shutters, altering the shop interior, or installing a security alarm or extractor fan.

Conservation Areas

18 Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest and stringent controls are in place to protect buildings within those areas.

19 Conservation Area Consent was abolished⁽²⁾ and replaced with a requirement for planning permission for demolition of a building / shop front in a conservation area.

Advertisement consent

20 The display of advertisements with the associated structure is controlled through Advertisement Consent and separate planning permission is not required in addition to the consent.

21 There are 3 different categories of advertisement consent which are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements)(England) Regulation 2007.

22 Detailed guidance is available in the Government publication 'Outdoor Advertisements and Signs: A Guide of Advertisers' available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outdoor-advertisements-and-signs-a-guide-for-advertisers>

23 In general, A-boards, signs that are larger than 0.3m² or illuminated, would require advertisement consent. As regulation on advertisement can be difficult to interpret, with certain criteria and conditions to be met, the Council should be contacted for advice prior to commencing any work.

Building Regulations

24 Building Regulation approval is required for new shop fronts when any alterations affect the buildings structural stability, means of escape or the position of the entrance approach and or doorway.

1 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/section/9>

2 Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013

Planning Application Checklist

25 The guidance below sets out a range of issues which should be considered in preparing design proposals and planning applications. More detailed guidance on the principles of good shop front design are set out in the following chapter.

Existing streetscape

Has the relationship of the proposed development to the adjoining buildings been taken into consideration?

Building elevations

Is the scale of the shopfront in proportion to the facade of the building?

Shopfront design

Is the design and materials employed in the scheme of good quality?

Signage

Are the graphics, advertisements and illumination appropriate to the scheme?

Canopies and blinds

Have they been considered within the overall design of the shopfront?

Shutters

If shutters are required are they of a type and location that does not obstruct any architectural features on the building or have an adverse environmental impact?

Are external shutters perforated and painted with the shutter box sited behind the fascia?

Access

Does the design allow access to all, including people with disabilities, in accordance with the Disability and Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005?

What do you need to submit in a planning application?

26 The Council provides a chargeable pre-application advice service. This enables you to seek formal advice from an Officer on the relative merits of the proposal prior to an application being submitted. Applicants and their agents are strongly advised to take full advantage of this service, details can be found on the Council's website.⁽³⁾

27 The Council adopted Validation of Planning Application Policy which is available on the Council's website.⁽⁴⁾

28 General guidance is detailed in the next page.

3 <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning-applications/get-advice-planning-proposals/4?documentId=122&categoryId=20099>
4 <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning-applications/get-advice-planning-proposals/6?documentId=122&categoryId=20099>

General guidance on validation of planning applications

In general, planning applications for alteration to shopfront and/or application for advertisement consent or Listed Building consent will need to provide:

- Planning application form (including ownership certificates, notices, agricultural land declaration)
- Location plan - scale 1:1250 or 1:2500, with the boundary of the property clearly marked in red
- Site/block plan - scale 1:200 or 1:500, indicating the exact location of the alteration or position of signage
- Existing and proposed elevations plan - scale 1:50 or 1:100
- Existing and proposed floor layouts plan (if relevant) - scale 1:50 or 1:100
- Planning fee

For Advertisement Consent, detail drawings of proposed signs clearly showing construction, lettering and graphic design would also be required

For Listed Building Consent, Heritage Statement would also be required

The following information may be required:

- Existing and proposed streetscape drawing, showing the application building and the adjoining buildings – scale 1:50 or 1:100
- Cross sections of the building – scale 1:20
- Building details (e.g joinery profiles, fascia fixture) -scale 1:5
- Information on materials, fittings and colours
- An access statement if alteration to the entrance is not DDA compliant, setting

out how the needs of disabled people have been taken into account.

- Large scale detail drawings of proposed signs at a scale of 1:5 will be required, clearly showing construction, lettering and graphic design



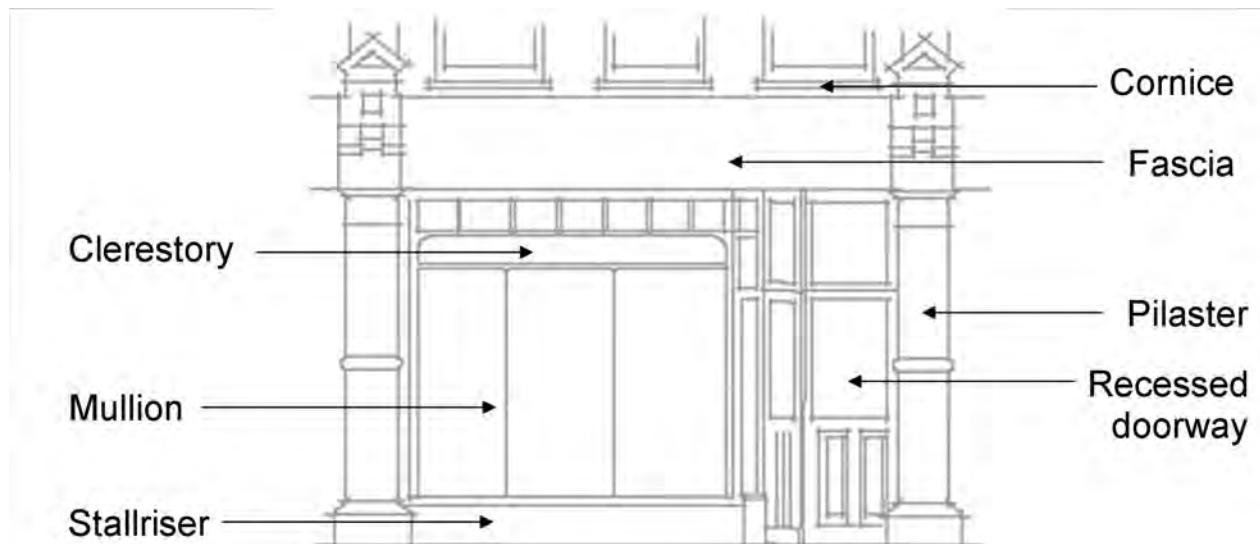
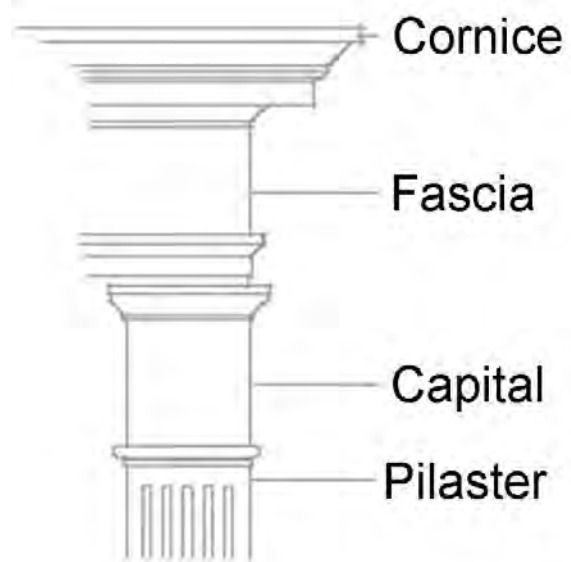
The Principles of Good Shop Front Design

29 The starting point when contemplating a new or replacement shop front will always be a study of the whole building facade and adjacent elevations, including any existing shop fronts.

30 Shop fronts for many people are the most visually important feature of a streetscene. It is therefore vitally important that they are of good proportions, details and materials.

31 Nineteenth century shop front design was based on a set of principles which achieved a satisfactory relationship between the shop front and the building as a whole.

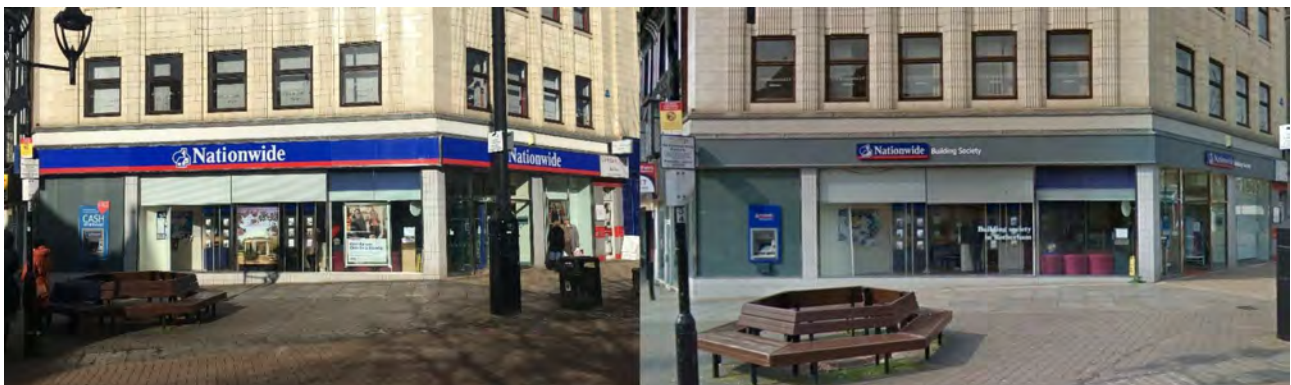
32 The pilaster, stallriser, cornice and fascia combine to enclose the shop window and the entrance door within a frame constructed to proportions which suggest a method of support for the building facade above. The main elements are in proportion to each other; the height of the stallriser should not exceed 20% of the overall shop front height, nor should the height of the entablature. These basic principles applied to traditional or contemporary shop fronts will result in an elevation which is visually pleasing.



33 Standard and corporate shop fronts have in the past had little regard for individual buildings and it is recommended that a modest interpretation of the corporate image is adopted that relates better to the building. It is particularly important that poor quality pastiche reproduction shop fronts are avoided. New shop fronts of an imaginative and creative design are encouraged which may be complimentary in proportion, scale, quality of materials and detailing to the building itself.



Example of corporate shop front alteration



Successful shop front design

Design respects the character of the whole building, with each element being of appropriate proportion.

Fascia for signage is of an appropriate size; not too large.

Sign details are in keeping with the character of the building, and of an appropriate size.



Key Design Principles

- The style of the shop front should harmonise with the age and character of the building as a whole.
- The scale of the shop front should be in proportion with the rest of the building.
- An existing shop front which contributes to the character of a building or area should be retained and refurbished rather than replaced. Any original features such as pilasters and fascia that have been concealed by later additions should be exposed and restored in order to enhance the appearance of the shop front.
- It is important that the replacement shop front respects the period and style of the building in terms of proportion and quality of materials and relate well to neighbouring properties.
- Where adjacent shop fronts are to be operated as a single concern then each shop front should be individually expressed by retaining or reintroducing pilasters between them.
- Over-cluttering of signage on the shopfront will not be supported as it can be harmful to the amenity.
- Illumination of shop signs should be carefully designed and have regard to the overall design and the surrounding area.
- Canopies and blinds should be incorporated within the overall design.
- Door recesses should not be deeper than 600mm and door should open inward so it would not encroach onto the public footpath.
- Doorways and entrances should be accessible to people with disabilities.

Shopfront unity and cohesion

34 Over time, alterations to shopfronts can lead to a disjointed appearance of a building and/or a loss of cohesion across a group of buildings in the street scene. When altering shopfronts, businesses and owners should aim to restore cohesion across architectural lines and design features of both the building itself and the adjacent buildings. Efforts should be made to establish visual order across all stories of a building or façade, as opposed to focusing on the ground floor shopfront in isolation.

35 Where opportunities exist to improve unity across a façade or group of buildings, the Council would encourage consistency in design as part of the planning process. Where site wide improvements are required, for instance in a conservation area, the council may impose planning conditions to secure improvements to the development.



Shop Front Design Elements

Signs

36 Shops are normally limited to one fascia sign and one hanging sign. The sign should be well designed to project a quality image. Multiple signage clutters the facade and must be avoided. Some signs require 'Advertisement Consent' from the Council.

Fascia Signs

37 Fascias should be no deeper than 20% of the shop front's overall height. They should not impinge on the original details of the shop front.

38 A traditional fascia comprising of a painted timber background with hand painted lettering is particularly appropriate for traditional shop fronts. Raised metal or timber letters are acceptable but garish shiny plastics are best avoided.

39 Lettering and graphics should be moderately sized and should be in proportion to the dimensions of the fascia. Clear well spaced letters are as easy to read as larger oversized letters. The sign should be kept simple with the name of the shop and a simple graphic logo and the street number. Too much information such as slogans and photographs creates visual clutter which will not be acceptable.

40 Bulky surface mounted box-like fascia signs that are attached over the front of fascia boards would detract from the appearance of the shop. They will not be permitted and alternatives should be considered.

41 Where there is a small fascia or none at all, individual letters may be applied to the face of the building or display signage internally. The font and materials of the lettering sign should be carefully considered.

Fascia Signs Illumination

42 Shopfront signage should be illuminated in a discreet manner without overly dominant fittings, clutter or cables. Ideally external light sources for signage should be concealed, and carefully directed at the sign, avoiding glare.

43 Lighting should be limited to the advertisement element (logos and letterings) and not the full width of the fascia. The use of slim LED lighting technology is recommended.

44 Translucent plastic letters or graphics are inset into an opaque panel which is illuminated from behind. The light box must be of slimline design; it should fully recessed behind the fascia, if this is not possible, it should have a minimal projection from the fascia panel.

45 Fascia signs with fully illuminated backgrounds (as opposed to illumination through letters / logo only) would not be acceptable as these can produce excessive glare, in particular if the background colour is bright, light or garish.

46 Individual letters stand proud of a surface and are lit from behind to produce a halo effect; a treatment which is suitable for fascias or wall mounting. Plastic lettering is not acceptable for traditional or listed buildings, quality individual letters in a suitable font and size are preferred.

Example of External Lighting



Hanging and Projected Signs

- 47** As a general rule, only one sign will be allowed per shop with an area no larger than 0.75m².
- 48** Timber or cast metal signs are particularly appropriate on traditional shop fronts. The sign should be mounted on a console at fascia level; or on a pilaster below fascia level; or below first floor cill level. External illumination maybe acceptable, such as Tungsten lamps
- 49** For modern shopfronts, modest slimline projecting signs with limited LED or neon illumination may be acceptable subject to the overall design of the shopfront. Careful design will be given consideration and would be assessed on its own merit.
- 50** Bulky, old-fashioned box signs are not considered to be acceptable. Modern, well-crafted, elegant box signs, particularly those employing thin fluorescent tubes or LEDs, with modest illumination restricted to lettering and / or graphics, are likely to be acceptable on contemporary shopfronts within shopping areas.

Example of hanging signs



Security

51 Local authorities have a responsibility under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their activities, and to do all that they can to reduce opportunities for crime and fear of crime in the exercise of their functions. Through its policies the Local Plan seeks to help achieve this by ensuring that developers and planning applicants consider security issues in developing proposals.

52 Developments are encouraged to meet the principles set out in current good practice guidance. 'Secured by Design' is an initiative operated by the Association of Chief Police Officers and includes the prevention of crime with regard to commercial premises and promotes the use of security standards for a wide range of applications and products. See their website for further information: <http://www.securedbydesign.com/>

53 The Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB) has produced standards to ensure that fire and security products and services perform effectively. See their website for further information: <http://www.redbooklive.com/lps.jsp>

Shutters

54 On new development, shutters should be designed as part of the building and located internally to prevent retrofitting of security measures to the detriment of the visual amenity of the built environment.

55 Internal perforated lattice grille shutters (powder or plastic coated) is the preferred shutter option. When used in conjunction with toughened and laminated glass of suitable specification it would meet the requirement of Secure by Design. These would act as a visible form of security without affecting the character of the original shopfront.

56 External roller shutters will only be considered suitable if it can be demonstrated that there is no other alternative and each application will be assessed on its own merits.

- Solid steel shutters are not acceptable as they can attract graffiti and create an undesirable hostile environment
- Aluminium shutters with compact shutter boxes are recommended as they are available in a wider range of design and powder coated colour options
- The shutter boxes should form an integral part of the shopfront surround, situated behind the fascia line
- The shutter should be perforated or punched to allow a minimum of 25% vision level (when back lit)
- Partial solid shutter will only be acceptable if it is no more than 30% coverage of the overall shutter (for example, at the base of the shutter closer to the ground)
- Tube and link shutters may be acceptable subject to appropriate design and specification

Example of Shop Front Restoration with external roller shutter



Reinforced Stallrisers and Steel Framed Shop Front

57 The reinforcement is an unobtrusive way to strengthen the shop front which would help to reduce the risk of ram raiding.

58 This is a commonly used on public buildings and banks, however it is also helpful to shops with high value goods such as jewellery and electronics.

Burglar Alarms

59 Burglar alarm boxes should not conceal architectural features or be positioned too conspicuously. Associated wiring should be hidden or at least neatly fixed. All fixings should be made of non-ferrous materials.

Examples of successful shop front designs



Doors and Thresholds

60 The Equality Act 2010 helps achieve equal opportunities in the workplace and in wider society. It includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments to physical features to ensure that a disabled person is not put at substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person.

61 Part M of The Building Regulations Access to and use of buildings establishes that reasonable provision must be made for people to access and use a building and its facilities. It provides very specific guidance details for level, ramped or stepped access, and for dimensions, characteristics and layout of doorways, including aspects of material finishes to be used, so as to enable access for people with limited physical dexterity and who are visually impaired.

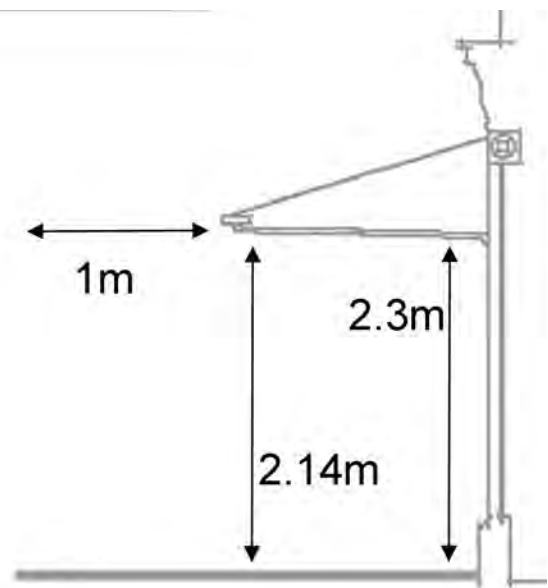
62 These standards apply to all new buildings, extensions and building works to and about entrances, including historic buildings such as listed buildings.

Canopies & Blinds

63 Blinds serve to protect perishable goods from deterioration due to strong sunlight and help to keep the interior cool. Projecting roller blinds are the preferred option as they form an integral part of the shop front and are retractable when not required.

64 Dutch canopies are made from canvas or plastic over a metal frame. They hide architectural details and interrupt the building elevation. Shops have a tendency to leave them open which results in deterioration of the fabric and untidy appearance over time which is not recommended.

65 Highway regulations require the outer edge of the blind to be set back at least 1m from the kerb and the outer and inner ends of the supporting arms not less than 2.14m and 2.3m above the pavement.



Lighting

66 Lighting should be considered as part of the overall design rather than an afterthought resulting in ad-hoc additions. Subtle lighting can add vitality to the night-time street scene but poorly designed bulky illuminated signs can look brash. Over illumination must be avoided as it can upset the balance of light and conflict with street lighting.

Fascia and Building Illumination

67 Fascia illumination, where it is required, should be considered as part of the street scene. A variety of subtle lighting styles will add interest.

68 Shop window display lighting contributes towards a safe night-time environment. Discrete spotlighting to highlight architectural features of a shop front or building is welcomed. Permission is not required unless the building is listed.

External lighting

69 Lamp types include tungsten halogen floods, tungsten spotlights, low voltage tungsten spotlights, swan-necked metal arms, and concealed modest LED lighting. The use of traditional fluorescent tubes is not recommended as they are bulky and not as durable.

Cold Cathode Tubes Decorative Signs

70 Graphically elegant neon signs may be acceptable if they are of moderate size, single colour and limited palette as they can be a distraction to highway users in low light conditions:-

Materials and Decoration

71 The following principles should be followed when considering materials and decoration:

- Ensure the colour scheme has regard to the building itself, the location and its surroundings.
- Use traditional materials such as painted timber wherever appropriate, particularly on Listed Buildings or buildings within the Conservation Area.
- Carefully chosen modern contemporary materials can be acceptable whilst still adhering to the principles of shop front design.
- Traditional oil based paints and pigments should be considered for historic buildings, referring to paint manufacturer's specialist historic colour charts for properties of a specific period.
- Monotone paint combinations can result in a stylish high quality scheme.
- Avoid garish or lurid colour schemes.
- Painted timber is preferable to stained or varnished hardwoods.
- Avoid the use of standard natural finish aluminium and unpainted softwoods.
- The use of acrylic sheeting, Perspex, plastic maybe acceptable on modern signage subject to detailed design
- Colour contrast should be employed to assist those with disabilities and visual impairments.
- Critical surfaces, such as doors, door edges and handrails should have sufficient visual contrast to background areas such as walls, ceilings and floors.

Contact Details

If you have any questions regarding this Supplementary Planning Document please contact Planning Policy:

Submit an enquiry to Planning Policy online:

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/xfp/form/535>

Email: planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk
Telephone: 01709 823869
Website: <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan>
Post: Planning Policy, Planning, Regeneration and Transport, Regeneration & Environment Services, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE

For planning application and pre-application advice, please contact Development Management:

Submit an enquiry to Development Management online:

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/xfp/form/216>

Email: development.management@rotherham.gov.uk
Telephone: 01709 823835
Website: <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning>
Post: Development Management, Planning, Regeneration and Transport, Regeneration & Environment Services, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE

Glossary

Entablature: The combination of cornice, fascia and architrave.

Cornice: Decorative moulded projection above the fascia providing weather protection and giving a strong line at the top of the shopfront.

Fascia: The wide board over the shopfront which provides the advertising space.

Architrave: A recessed plane of one or more horizontal mouldings whose function is to 'finish off' the bottom of the fascia.

Window: Glazing of a size appropriate to the design of the building as a whole. Avoid overlarge expanses of glass which are expensive to replace.

Stallriser: Vertical surface giving protection at ground level to the shopfront, providing a solid base. They are made of polished granite, marble, tile or wood and provide a cill for glazing.

Pilaster: Traditional shopfront dividing column between adjoining properties, designed with a base and capital, which supports the console and fascia.

Console: Bracket which frames or contains the end of the fascia panel. Provides a key element in maintaining the vertical rhythm of the streetscape.

Fanlight: A window above a door.

Doors and doorways: Recessed, in keeping with other elements with a return which matches the stallriser.

